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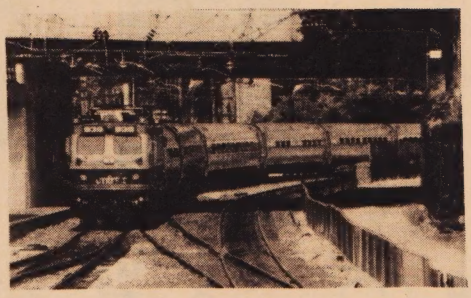

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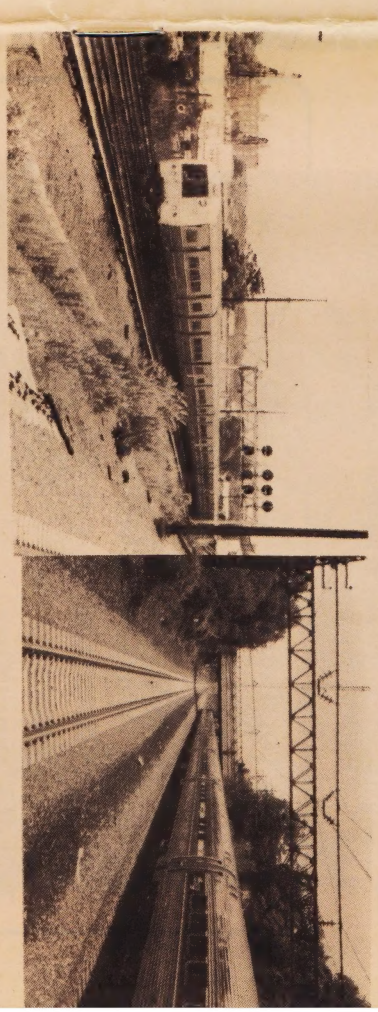

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Vol. 27, no.13. Whole no. 592, October 16, 1998. Copyright © 1998 by Message Media. Address all mail to Message Media, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Subscription rate $26 per year to US & possessions. To other countries $35 per year. Single copy $1.25.
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ON THE COVER

(Front cover:) Equipment for Amtrak train 169, the *Evening Metropolitan*. is pulled into Boston's South Station on June 23. Amtrak engine 197, a GP40TC on the rear of the train, provides power for the move. Train 169 will head south for New York and Philadelphia at 6:35pm. Photo by Bill Hakkarinen.

(Rear cover, upper:) The Great Circus Train '98 shoves toward Milton Jct after visiting Janesville WI on July 27. (Lower:) A rare sight in 1998: An in-use bay window caboose brings up the rear of the Great Circus Train '98 at St. Francis WI on July 27. On CSX this would not be called a "caboose"; it's a "shoving platform". CSX no longer recognizes the existence of cabooses. Photos by Miles Post. See his article on the Circus Train in this issue, starting on page 12.

EAST COAST REPORT

(Left:) Newark, New Jersey Subway's famed fleet of PCC cars is scheduled to be replaced by new articulated equipment in late 1999. This is the last light rail system that operates PCCs in New Jersey, which purchased a fleet of 30 PCCs from Twin Cities Rapid Transit in 1952. Currently 43 light rail cars are being built by Kinki Sharyo Co. Ltd. of Osaka, Japan for NJ Transit, which operates the Newark Subway System. Sixteen of the new cars will replace the PCCs and the remaining 27 cars will be placed on NJ Transit's Hudson-Bergen LRT line. The new cars are 90 feet long and will seat 68 passengers plus standees. The entrance to the Newark Subway is in the basement of Newark Penn Station, easily reached by NJ Transit and Amtrak trains, as well as by the PATH system. The subway operates only on weekdays, and at $1.00 to ride to the end of the 4.3-mile line is a real bargain. The future disposition of the PCCs is uncertain at this time, and hopefully some of them can be saved for excursions, and at least one will be donated to the new New Jersey Railroad Museum, which is in the planning stages.

In the above photo, PCCs no. 10 and 24 are seen meeting at the end of the line at Franklin Avenue Loop on August 10. The car on the right have just loaded its passengers and will depart shortly for Penn Station. Photo and caption by Teresa Renner.

Construction on a new concourse for NJ Transit on the 7th Avenue side of New York's Penn Station will begin in early 1999. The project will smooth the flow of commuters through the station, which is expected to handle an additional 20,000 commuters by 2003. New staircases, elevators and escalators and a separate ticketing and waiting room area are included in the $58 million contract, which was approved Oct 14 by the NJ Transit board. Completion is planned for 2001.

Meanwhile, Amtrak is proceeding with an interim remodeling of Penn Station. Amtrak plans a small facelift, adding two new waiting rooms and other improvements in preparation for high-speed rail service in 1999. The $37 million project is an interim plan only, as the company will be spending over $300 million to convert the General Post Office on 8th Avenue into the "new" Penn Station.

Boston's "Big Dig": A Railfan's View
By Bill Hakkarinen

What would you call an $11 *billion* construction project, the largest public works project underway in the US? In Boston it's called "The Big Dig". Officially called the Central Artery/Third Harbor Tunnel Project, the Dig daily transforms Boston transportation. Through it all, surrounded on all sides, runs Boston's Southside MBTA Rail commuter Service and Amtrak into South Station.. The project stretches from South Boston through the downtown to North Station and the North End.

Rails have actually had a resurgence, in part because of the construction. Auto traffic to the south of Boston was to be so disrupted that restoration of former New Haven Railroad Old Colony commuter service was seen to be one way of easing the distress. These trains add to the movements from South Station to the coach yards, making for very busy traffic on the rail bridge over the Fort Point Channel bridge just out of South Station.

The Big Dig is not without controversy. While rail proponents argue for trains to run through between South Station and North Station, others bemoan the cost overruns, and signs of protest can be seen here and there surrounding the sites. Currently, a rail connection is not planned, but reportedly construction techniques may allow its addition in the future. For the present, depressing the Central Expressway through downtown seems the highest priority.

For the rail enthusiast, a walk out onto the Broadway Bridge provides an overview of the gigantic project. Pile drivers, cranes, sand, channel diversions and steel beams combine to give the illusion of a giant's model railroad under construction. Amtrak and MBTA commuter trains pick their way through the workers, their riders no doubt smug and serene when they see the automobile traffic jams surrounding them. As the 15-year project unfolds, the vistas will change, but for now rails amidst the construction provide a fascinating sight.

●●●

The Newburyport extension of MBTA commuter rail was scheduled to begin handling riders October 26. The extension over the 8.5 miles from Ipswich MA involved track reconstruction, with replacement of two Muddy Run bridges and the Rowley River and Parker River bridges. Twelve grade crossings were rebuilt, along with four new interlockings and the installation of a TCS signal system. Reporting on the construction, the B&M RR Historical Society said that the track is now 132-lb welded rail on wooden ties, with switch timbers of azobe, a tropical wood that needs no chemical preservatives. The first train to run on the rebuilt line was a work train last Apr 30, while on May 17 an MBTA publicity train of five coaches and F40 #1063 was used for a photo session.

Besides Newburyport, there is a station stop at Rowley, on the site of the former depot there. The Newburyport stop is where the Eastern Route Main Line, the Newburyport Branch, and Newburyport City RR and the Pond St. Freight Track all came together.

The Long Island Rail Road in October said that its Grand Central Connection has been endorsed by the MTA Board and that planning has advanced to where the first federal grant has been allocated and where preliminary cost and schedule info has been prepared. LIRR estimates that the project will be finished in 2009, but "every effort will be made to speed up that schedule". The next steps are to finished an environmental impact analysis and begin designing the tunnels and other infrastructure.

The project consists of a rail line to be built between Queens and GCT in Manhattan for use by LIRR commuters using the Main Line and the Port Washington Branch. A new station will be built at Sunnyside in Queens, on the route to Penn Station. The project is needed because about half of LIRR commuters have destinations on the east side of Manhattan but now must travel to Penn Station on the west side and backtrack to their destinations.

Trains will reach Manhattan from Queens via the lower level of the two-level tunnel already existing under the East River at 63rd St. (The upper level is used by the subways; by 2001 it will connect to the Queens Blvd subway lines. The lower level has always been intended for LIRR, but there have never been any connections to it.) The Grand Central Connection project will build connecting tunnels on both sides of the East River. In GCT, LIRR trains will occupy the western part of the lower level, now used by Metro-North for maintenance and storage of trains. LIRR pointed out that M-N service will not be reduced because of this change.

LIRR published a folder in October giving info on the project and providing maps of the route.

State of Connecticut will have to pay for a larger portion of Metro-North operating costs under an arbitration decision reached in Sep. The change is retroactive to 1995 and goes on for five years.

Conrail freight car too high for an overpass over tracks in the Bronx struck the Hudson Line overpass early on Sep 18. The train derailed and badly snarled Metro-North commuter service for a good part of the day. No one was injured in the wreck of the 125-car NY-Albany freight

Philadelphia's SEPTA will move ahead with planning for two cross-region light rail lines linking Trenton NJ with Downingtown PA and downtown Philadelphia with Reading PA. The Trenton-Downingtown line, called the Cross County Metro, is 52 miles long and follows the ex-PRR Trenton Cutoff, a low-grade line built as a Philadelphia-area freight bypass. The line crosses SEPTA's regional rail lines at Woodbourne, Willow Grove and Ft. Washington, plus the R6 and Route 100 rail lines linking Norristown with Philadelphia and Upper Darby, respectively.

Cross County Metro is estimated to cost $720 million to build. The first of two phases built, beginning in 2002, would link Glenloch, Chester County, with Norristown. An alternate route would pass through Port Kennedy, near Valley Forge, and King of Prussia.

Schuylkill Valley Metro is a joint project of SEPTA and the Berks Area Reading Transportation Authority. The Delaware Valley Association of Rail Passengers has criticized the choice of dual-mode light rail, yet to be used anywhere on rail passenger lines, while SEPTA ignores General Electric's dual-mode Genesis locomotive which could use existing SEPTA and Conrail lines. DVARP believes the choice of light rail for the entire route, instead of for a short distance from downtown Philadelphia, would lengthen the construction period by years.

SEPTA was expected to award a $3.8 million contract to Urban Engineering of Philadelphia to conduct a major investment study of Schuylkill Valley Metro. This line would be 62 miles in length and carry some 30,500 riders daily.

The Cross County Metro is estimated to carry 14,700 daily riders. By comparison, Baltimore's 22-mile Central Light Rail line between Timonium (before the Hunt Valley Extension) and Glen Burnie carries 18,000 daily riders. San Diego Trolley's 16-mile South Line from downtown to San Ysidro handles at least 21,000 daily riders. Dallas' 20-mile light rail carries 35,000 daily. Cleveland's Red Line Rapid linking Windermere and Hopkins Airport, carries about 25,000 daily riders on its 19-mile route, and is not modern light rail in the conventional sense.

SEPTA and its biggest union, Transport Workers Union local 234, reached an agreement Oct 22, ending nearly a year of contract talks that included the 40-day strike. The contract must still be ratified by TWU members and face an approval vote by SEPTA's board. For SEPTA transit workers, the agreement includes a no-layoff clause, changes to medical benefits for injured workers who are on sick leave, a 3% annual wage hike and a 30% increase in pension benefits. SEPTA won a zero-tolerance drug and alcohol policy. An arbitrator will rule on whether SEPTA can employ up to 100 part-time drivers to operate small buses; SEPTA had wanted an unlimited number.

SEPTA is launching a $4.8-million ad campaign to win back riders lost during the strike. This is being done by increasing the $2.7 million ad contract with a Maryland-based ad firm, Earle Palmer Brown, to $7.5 million. Another $7 million has been spent on rider incentives since the strike ended. TWU officials criticized the ad campaign, saying the money would have been better spent to settle the contract early and avoid the strike in the first place. The new ad campaign plus the $7 million for incentives would have been more than enough to close gaps in the contract, say TWU reps. SEPTA ridership is down 8-10% since the strike ended. SEPTA's apparent answer is to have ad blitzes and rider giveaways and to stall on a labor agreement, instead of simply putting service on the street.

New Jersey Transit replaced its Atlantic City rail line shuttle buses with an expanded jitney system linking the rail terminal with Pacific Avenue, at least a block's walk from most casino-hotels and other attractions. The jitney takeover took place in July. Since then, many riders have complained about long waits for jitneys, being forced to walk or take taxis at their own expense to reach the rail station in time for their trains, and of general inconvenience.

The NJT bus shuttles, using standard transit buses, began in April 1990 and offered free rides for rail passengers. NJT has replaced them by buying 190 small, 14-seat buses for the Atlantic City Jitney Association, and having the jitney group repay NJT by carrying rail commuters between the station and job sites in Atlantic City. The shuttle buses ran close to hotel and casino entrances; jitneys operate mainly on Pacific Avenue.

The jitney association is to try to improve the poor service by obtaining four 32-seat buses to supplement the jitneys during peak hours. An advertising firm will provide the buses, which will display its ads. The buses should be in service by Nov 15, said jitney association pres. Bill Penman.

NJT spent $12.2 million in Transportation Trust Fund money to acquire the 190 jitneys, to replace Atlantic City's aging jitney fleet. The service is free to rail line passengers, who must obtain roundtrip vouchers in the rail terminal before boarding the jitneys. Jitneys may carry only seated passengers, no standees, and some riders complain that they have been bypassed by jitneys that had empty seats.—James Thornton.

RAIL CANADA

The St. John's, Newfoundland, Evening Telegram reported about the tenth anniversary of the end of the Newfoundland Railway as follows:

"On July 23, 1988, in what was then the Radisson Plaza Hotel in downtown St. John's, a gaggle of politicians did something wind, storm, rain, snow and derailment were not able to do: they ended the 107-year history of the Newfoundland Railway.

"Premier Brian Peckford, International Trade Minister John Crosbie–the province's representative in the federal cabinet–and Canadian National boss Ron Lawless announced a $800.6 million deal to upgrade transportation in the province, often referred to as the roads-for-rails agreement.

"In return for waiving Ottawa's responsibility for the rail service as stated in articles 30-35 of the Terms of Union between the province and Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador agreed to abandon a second-rate, trans-island rail freight service for new roads, bridges and improvements to the Trans-Canada Highway."

The agreement took effect on Sep 30, 1988, with the last freight train running that day. The Newfoundland Railway's passenger service had already ended on July 3, 1969.

Reports Gene Poon: I visited Newfoundland in 1982 and rode all the remaining passenger services, which were mixed trains. A coach was coupled ahead of the caboose. Heat was by coal stove. Passengers had access to the caboose if they wanted. If the crew was in a good mood, you could ride the engine.

At Whitbourne Jct., you could see the remains of the narrow gauge sleeping car (sections, bedrooms) and diner that once ran on the trans-island first class train. The engines were custom-built EMD units. Freight cars were normal standard gauge, their trucks changed out when the cars arrived on the ferry at Port-au-Basques.

It was a charming few days, but you knew the railroad was dying, just as had the once-bustling US Navy base at Argentia, its empty buildings and cracking, weed-grown roads having become silent and morose. Argentia was the terminus of one of the "mixed" trains, but it actually was a pure passenger run. Total passenger count for the whole trip: five, of which four were local residents; plus two who were CN employees. Not a single car of freight, though, and precious little opportunity to get any freight business at all.

Next day I rode with the same crew to Carbonnear (the mixed served two different

routes, each bi-weekly). This time we had freight, two boxcars for Harbour Grace, where a freighter once ran aground off shore in a Nor'easter, the rusting hulk still looming in the shallows thirty years later. The conductor said it was the busiest day he'd had in a month.

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The Swiss-built *Trans Europ Express* cars that operated on the Ontario Northland for many years are being returned to a museum in Switzerland. The cars were to leave from the port of St. John NB around the end of October. In 1992 ONR bought Tempo cars being retired by CN and set aside the TEE cars, storing them in North Bay, ON.

Canadian Transport Minister David Collenette said there isn't money for the government to develop a high-speed rail system in the Windsor-Toronto-Quebec City corridor, but he is willing to "franchise" portions of VIA's national system to private operators. His comments were a response to 11 recommendations from the House of Commons committee on transportation, which suggested the govenrment spend $25 million to help Ontario and Quebec develop the Lynx high-speed rail proposal.

He said that Transport Canada and VIA Rail will prepare a new long-term business plan to define VIA's route structure, levels of service, funding and equipment needs. He said the government will encourage partnerships between VIA and the private sector.

VIA Budd RDC car 6110 is reported stored in the coach yards just west of Toronto. This car is the first Budd RDC, the prototype of the class.

Home Hardware Special train was reported in Halifax Oct 8, ready to turn and head west Oct 9. Its consist was: Home Hardware F40 6429, VIA F40 6415; repainted VIA cars (no HEP) 5576 & 5581 in Home Hdwe yellow below window line with various product sponsor names in windows. HEP cable from engines ran through coach aisles to the following VIA cars: baggage 8610, coach 8103, slprs "Chateau Iberville", "Abbot Manor" & "MacDonald Manor", diner "Imperial", slprs "Cabot Manor" & "Franklin Manor", dome-obs-slpr "Tremblant Park".

WEST COAST REPORT

Southern Pacific logo on waste water tank at Dunsmuir CA, photographed 9/98 by John Pearson. Background color of circular logo is blue, and likewise the diesel train.

More Thanksgiving trains: Amtrak's Cascades service will add trains 757 on Nov 24, 25, 27, 28 & 29; and 748 on Nov 25-29. Equipment for the trains will be Amfleet I coaches and a café car (for snacks only). There is no checked baggage and no smoking. The schedule is as follows:

Read Down			Read Up
#757	TRAIN NUMBER		#748
550P	Dp	Seattle Ar	1155A
646P	Dp	Tacoma Dp	1045A
732P	Dp	Olympia/Lacey Dp	957A
754P	Dp	Centralia Dp	935A
839P	Dp	Kelso/Longview Dp	850A
920P	Dp	Vancouver, WA Dp	810A
1000P	Ar	Portland, OR Dp	745A

BART celebrated its new role as manager of the Amtrak *Capitol* Corridor trains on Oct 15 with a whistlestop run of one of the trains for officials and politicians. BART said three trains will eventually be added to the then four (one Oct 25, one in Jan and one in April). BART said it will promote the trains more aggressively.

Altamont Commuter Express service, Stockton-San Jose CA, began revenue operation Oct 19 with good loads from the start: 600-700 passengers—"comfortably full loads", according to ACE officials. The two morning trains arrived only a couple of minutes late, according to reports, even tho they encountered some unexpected delays. ACE plans to put on a third, later-morning train in the near future (see trip report below on the second day of operation).

Some transportation issues are on the Nov 3 ballots in the Bay Area. Marin and Sonoma Counties vote on sales tax increases to fund a light rail system on NWP rail lines. San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley and Emeryville all have advisory votes on whether to include commuter rail in the coming rebuild of the SF-Oakland Bay Bridge.

Amtrak bus connections to Yosemite changed Oct 1 due to construction on the highway from Merced. Trains 711 & 712 connect to Yosemite from Riverbank instead of Merced. New bus 8312 runs Riverbank to Yosemite only. Bus 8413 lvs Yosemite 60 mins earlier and bus 8417 lvs 10mins earlier while bus 8418, the last from Yosemite, was discontinued. There are other changes. Passengers should consult with Amtrak.

The *San Diegans* have the following schedule changes with the Oct 25 timetable change: Northbd, virtually all trains have minor adjustments to intermediate times. Train 577 lvs San Diego 5mins later. Train 779 runs about 20mins earlier from San Diego to San Luis Obispo. Train 581, leaving San Diego at 1:35pm, is the new 11th train. Former train 781 becomes new train 783 on about the same schedule. Former train 583 becomes new train 585, and is extended to Chatsworth. Former weekend train 595 becomes new train 597, leaving San Diego 5mins later and going only as far as L.A. Likewise, former weekday train 585 becomes new train 587 and runs only as far as L.A. Former train 587 becomes new train 589, leaving San Diego 15mins later at 8pm. Former weekend train 597 becomes new train 599.

Southbd, all trains also have minor adjustments to intermediate times. Former train 568 becomes new train 566. Former train 570 becomes new train 568. Former weekday train 572 becomes new train 570 and lvs L.A. 10mins later. Former weekend train 562 becomes new train 560 and lvs Chatsworth 5mins later. Former train 774 becomes new train 772, leaving Goleta 25 mins earlier at 6:35am. Train 574, leaving L.A. at 11:05am, is the new 11th schedule. All other changes are minor.

The *San Joaquins* get the following changes Oct 25: The only northbd changes are minor adjustments to the times at Berkeley and Emeryville. Southbd, all changes are between Oakland and Martinez, with an Oakland departure for all trains 5mins later.

‣ BNSF is planning to undertake a major construction project, replacing ties between Fresno and Bakersfield during the last two weeks of Jan 1999, weather permitting. During this period, the railroad will be completely shut down. Freight trains will be

rerouted on the parallel UP (ex-SP) line. *San Joaquin* trains will probably operate only between Oakland and Fresno, with all Southern California bus connections operating out of and into Fresno. A local bus will cover Hanford, Corcoran and Wasco, connecting with other buses in Bakersfield and with trains at Fresno.

If everything goes as planned, the fifth *San Joaquin* round trip will begin operating in Jan or Feb—ideally at the end of the tie-replacement project described above. Current plans call for this train to be an early-morning departure from Sacramento, stopping at the ACE (former SP) station in Stockton and then following the current route from Riverbank to Bakersfield. Returning from Bakersfield, the train will be on an evening schedule, leaving Bakersfield after 5pm and arriving in Sacramento before midnight. There will be a full complement of So.Cal. bus connections, and probably a Sacramento-Davis bus connection.

At the same time, it is planned to make trains 712 and 717 express runs, skipping Berkeley, Turlock/Denair, Madera, Corcoran and Wasco.

***Capitol* Route changes:** On July 1, 1998 the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA) assumed responsibility for the *Capitol* corridor. The service will continue to be operated by Amtrak as part of the Amtrak California system, and funding will continue to be provided by the State of Cal. through Caltrans; however, management decisions will be made by the CCJPA. It is not clear what the overall impact of this change will be.

Starting Oct 25 a fifth *Capitol* round trip is added between Oakland and Sacramento. A sixth round trip is planned to begin in the winter, so a place has been reserved for it, and train numbers have been modified accordingly.

Westbd, former train 721 becomes train 723, with minor adjustments to intermediate times. On weekends it will run as new train 743, leaving Sacramento at 7am, arriving Oakland at 9:25am (replacing former weekend train 733). Former train 723 becomes train 725, operating weekdays only with some minor schedule adjustments. On weekends it will operate as train 743, leaving Colfax 1hr, 5mins later at 7:05am, arriving San Jose at 12:25pm. The sixth train will be a later morning departure from Sacramento, so train no. 727 has been reserved for it. Former train 725 is renumbered 729 with some minor schedule adjustments. New train 731 lvs Sacramento at 2:40pm, arriving Oakland at 4:55pm. Former train 727 becomes train 733 with some minor schedule adjustments.

Eastbd, the new train is train 720, on weekdays, leaving Oakland 6:15am and arriving Sacramento at 8:40am. On weekends it will be train 740, leaving Oakland at 7:25am, arriving Sacramento at 9:50am. To balance the morning schedule, train 722 will leave San Jose 1½ hrs later at 7:50am, arriving Sacramento at 11:20am. The sixth train will be a midday departure from Oakland, so train no. 724 has been reserved for it. Former train 724 has been renumbered as train 726 and runs about 30mins later, leaving San Jose at 1:15pm. Former train 726 has been renumbered 728 and leaves Oakland 5mins later at 5:30pm, arriving Colfax at 9:25pm. Former train 728 is renumbered 730 and returns to daily operation (replacing former weekend train 738). Departure time from San Jose is unchanged, at 3:35pm, with some minor adjustments to intermediate times.—Caltrans.

125 YEARS OF CABLE CARS IN SAN FRANCISCO

On August 2, 1873 the first San Francisco cable car began operation, on the now-defunct Clay Street line.

Back in 1973 the city commemorated the event that occurred one hundred years previous. (See RTN 64.) Apparently no special note was taken this year of the 125th anniversary.

No ACE in the Hole

A first ride on the Altamont Commuter Express by Duncan Watry

About 15 people loosely associated with the Northern California Railroad Club rode the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) on Tuesday, Oct 20 as part of a Bay Area-wide "iron triangle", on the second day of ACE service.

The first action was catching Caltrain at 2pm in San Francisco. It was a fairly regular ride to San Jose, except for all the slow orders for grade-separation projects. Special points of interest were in Millbrae, where BART construction crews appear to be mobilizing to begin construction of the Millbrae BART station. In Mountain View, tracks are being laid for the VTA light rail connection, next to the Caltrain tracks.

In San Jose there was much confusion at the ticket counter because the agent did not have the correct ticket stock for all zones for ACE. We had been forewarned of possible problems with the Amtrak agents refusing to sell ACE tickets, but the problem was resolved when a messenger arrived with the appropriate ticket stock.

In the 45mins in San Jose between trains, three other trains arrived: a northbd Caltrain, southbd Caltrain and a southbd *Capitol*. The ACE train backed into the station from the yard at 4:13pm for a 4:15 departure, and left at 4:16 with a fairly good load.

At the Great America stop, which is the shuttle bus connection for the Silicon Valley employees, the train filled to about 2/3 capacity. ACE uses the ex-SP Mulford line to Newark, then uses the Centerville line to reach the Fremont stop. Work was in evidence on double-tracking the Centerville line.

A good number of passengers detrained at Fremont (there is no good transit connection between San Jose and Fremont, so ACE really fills a niche here). The ACE clientele appeared to be mostly higher-end types—lots of people using cel phones, laptops, etc., but ACE does not seem to have anticipated this with electrical connections at the seats, as other commuter operators have done with newer equipment.

At Niles, we transitioned to the UP's former WP main for the ride through Niles Canyon and on to Pleasanton and Livermore. At the Livermore stop, LAVTA has built an intermodal bus facility next to the ACE stop, but the two are separated by barbed wire fences! There is no way to transfer between the two without walking about a half-mile out to the street and back!

At Pleasanton and Livermore, fair numbers of people got off. East of Livermore we overtook an eastbd UP freight in the siding and glided on through Altamont Pass. I-580, which is the *raison d'être* for ACE and is usually at a standstill, looked to be fairly free-flowing.

Dropping down into the Central Valley, we let off most remaining passengers at Tracy and Lathrop/Manteca, and passed three westbd UP freights in sidings. ACE stayed on the old WP main all the way into the south end of Stockton and then transitioned to the former SP line at the south end of the yard. (Many in our group had expected to switch back to the old SP in Lathrop.)

We were held for a few minutes by a BNSF intermodal freight at Stockton Tower, and then pulled into the ACE station at the former SP station, discharging into the street because the track to the platform has not been constructed yet.

By Stockton, only about 40 or 50 were left on the train, but not bad for the second day. Some of us were then interviewed by a KQED-TV (San Francisco) reporter who was looking for a real commuter!

We walked to dinner at Cancun Restaurant in downtown Stockton and then against all advice, a group of four of us walked the 15 blocks to the Santa Fe station to catch the *San Joaquin* when it appeared that the cabs we had called would not come.

The *San Joaquin* left on time at 8:14pm and it was a slow ride back because we kept hitting red signals on the BNSF. We stopped for a meet with a BNSF eastbd near Pittsburg, and made Martinez about 30mins late. The train crew reported that train 14, the *Coast Starlight*, was running about 1½ hours late, for those connecting.

Arrival in Emeryville was close to on time, thanks to padding, and the bus ride back to San Francisco was swift, if not sure. Perhaps in deference to the rail historians aboard, the bus driver let us out at Transbay Terminal before proceeding to the current Amtrak stop at the Ferry Building.

All in all, ACE seems to be a hit, even on the second day, and there is talk of a third train. Judging from the number of UP freights we met, something will need to be done about capacity issues over Niles/Altamont if UP is going to agree to this for longer than the 3-year demonstration. Some of the pace seemed leisurely, but this may be a result of padding because of the capacity issues. If they can be dealt with, perhaps significant time could be cut from the schedule, making it an even more attractive alternative.

Riding the Other Cable Car Line

by Jim Russell

I couldn't remember how long it had been since I had used the California Street cable car line in San Francisco. It starts near the BART Embarcadero station on Market Street and runs up the steep California Street hill, terminating near Van Ness Avenue. It crosses the more heavily used Powell Street line at right angles. Many times I had been at the Embarcadero station and had wanted to use the cable car, but nearly every time the vehicles were like a static museum display. Nothing was happening, and some other mode of transport, such as walking, seemed better, given the constraints of time.

On Sunday, Oct 4 we found ourselves emerging from the Embarcadero station at noon, aiming for a destination over the top of the California Street hill (Nob Hill). We had traveled there on BART, starting at 11:24 from the El Cerrito Plaza station on a beautiful autumn day. BART trains on weekends run at 20-min intervals, and on Saturday evenings and Sundays there is no direct service from our line, the Richmond line, to San Francisco. So we transferred at the MacArthur station to an SF train (actually a Colma train) that had started out from Pittsburg/Bay Point.

The train was full, and the addition of the transferring passengers—almost the entire trainload shifted to the SF train—caused sardine-can standee conditions. At the Ashby station, before the transfer point, a man had boarded wearing a purple jester's outfit and a seven-pointed hat (six lateral and one vertical), with his face painted white and a cockatiel perched on his shoulder. After the transfer, he was very close to us.

The bird seemed nearly oblivious to the crowd around it and the noise and rocking motions of the train. It sat preening itself, shifting its position and hanging on when the movements of its owner and of the train forced it to do so. Each time the jester turned his head, one of the points of the hat would sweep toward the bird's head, forcing it to duck. This it did nonchalantly, as if it were just one of those ordinary everyday adjustments one makes to the environment.

The jester talked to some children who were seated nearby along with their parents. He pulled out a long pink balloon, inflated it and tied it into a pattern, giving it to a child. "Shades of the *Coast Starlight*", I thought, "Amtrak pays entertainers to do this, while BART gets them for free".

Detraining at Embarcadero, we saw an empty cable car in front of us, its operator sitting on one of its open-air seats, eating a bag lunch. We had only 25mins to get up the hill, and we assessed our options. We asked the operator when the next cable car would be leaving. Without looking up, he pointed across the street to the other track, saying "Over there".

Trying a second time to get our question answered by this Muni grump, we asked "When does the next car leave?" He answered "Twenty minutes", still frowning and not looking up from his sandwich.

SAN FRANCISCO MUNICIPAL RAILWAY
ONE RIDE

RECEIPT ONLY
NOT GOOD
FOR BOARDING
OCT 4, 1998
SUNDAY
14654

$2.00

We had to rule out the cable car. A taxi approached just then, and we hailed it and reached our destination quickly, at a cost of five dollars (the cable car would have been four dollars for two people).

For our return trip, we had no time pressures, and walked up the block and a half from our venue to the end of the cable car line near Van Ness. A fairly large group of people suddenly gathered at the boarding platform in the middle of the street. We waited with them, and soon could be seen the silhouette of an approaching cable car at the crest of the hill.

Before long, it pulled alongside us and everyone scrambled aboard. The half-dozen or so people on board presumably managed to get off during the onslaught of new riders. We happened to be opposite the open rear boarding section of the car and hopped on quickly, securing seats indoors. The car would reverse its direction, so we were near the front rather than the rear. With everyone on, it was again sardine-can time. Most of the riders seemed to be German tourists. They had traveled halfway around the world to take this short trip in this jammed little wooden car.

Our car got underway at 3:01. At Grant Avenue we met an ascending car. The two cars were stopped alongside each other in the intersection for a minute or so, and it would have been possible, though not logical, to jump from one car onto the other and reverse one's travel direction. A conductor came through the car calling for unpaid fares. We handed him four dollars and he gave us two blue receipts, each picturing a cable car.

We reached the end of the line near Market Street at 3:18, walked the quarter block to the BART station entrance and in just a few minutes an eastbound train pulled in. However, it was not the Pittsburg/Bay Point train that would take us most directly to our transfer station, but rather a Dublin/Pleasanton train. We decided to take it to the Lake Merritt station and change to a Richmond train there, which required backtracking a short distance.

The Richmond train was the first of the four of the day on which we pulled one of the newer cars with blue rather than dark brown upholstery. The carpets on these newer cars seem thicker and spongier than the old brown carpets.

Backtracking to the 12th Street (Oakland) station, where we would have changed from a Pittsburg train, our train pulled in ahead of the Pittsburg vehicle and we waited a few minutes for it. Once passengers had crossed the platform and settled into their new seats, the two trains started up. This transfer situation makes interesting viewing as one watches the train on the adjoining track "racing" us as far as MacArthur, where the two lines diverge.

We were soon back to El Cerrito Plaza, ending an entertaining day of riding Bay Area public transit.

EGYPTIAN TRAIN DERAILS

An Alexandria to Kafr el-Sheik passenger train derailed Oct 18 at the Kafr el-Dawar station, with the locomotive and first two cars leaving the track and running into a crowd of people on the platform, killing at least 47 and injuring 101. The location is 20 miles SE of Alexandria.

Trams and Turboliners: Riding Egyptian Rails

By Bruce J. Russell

Part one of this article appeared in RTN 590.

After the suburban stop, the Turboliner driver really opened up the throttle and we were racing along the well-maintained, double track line at about 100mph. Welded rail was present, since no clickety-clack sound was heard. We always seemed to be meeting trains headed the opposite direction. This is obviously Egypt's busiest railway route, and needs to be electrified. The traffic density is certainly there. The purchase of six 14-car Turboliners was probably a stopgap measure to improve the level of service until the money could be found to erect catenary.

We bypassed many stations, and I noticed that all had high-level platforms. I also realized that the left-hand rule was observed—trains ran on the left rather than on the right, as they do in the US. This was obviously the result of British influence during the last century. From 1882 until 1920, Egypt was under England's control.

The terrain was absolutely flat. What impressed me most were the large numbers of irrigation canals bringing water to the fields, which were a brilliant green. Between Cairo and Alexandria the Nile breaks up into many branches before emptying into the Mediterranean. It's hard to conceptualize that this water originates thousands of miles away in central Africa in a number of lakes. From the branches of the delta, canals extend directly into the fields. Most of Egypt is desert and incapable of supporting agriculture, but the region between the two principal cities is different. I was uncertain what the crops I saw growing were, but the green fields extended to the horizon.

Every few miles the train sped past a village. Most houses were of red brick, but here and there mud dwellings were seen. These are made the same way they were 3000 years ago, by mixing straw with mud and letting it back in the hot summer sun. In every village were two or three minarets belonging to local mosques. However, church steeples topped with crosses were also very visible. The Coptic Christians of Egypt live everywhere among the Muslims and their houses of worship appear undisturbed. This is a stark contrast to Lebanon, where Christian-Muslim fighting has gone on for decades.

The train slowed and stopped at a place called Sidi Gabor, a modern station a few miles outside Alexandria. It had several platforms and I noticed that suburban trains were arriving and departing. These were push-pull types consisting of a cab car, six intermediate coaches and a GE locomotive. Whether these engines were built locally under license or imported from the US or Canada could not be determined. Regardless, the trains were painted orange and green and filled to capacity. Once again electrification would make sense here. I suspect that eventually it will occur.

Our train arrived at the main Alexandria station known as MISR exactly on time. Amtrak ought to take note of this fact! On the opposite platform was an identical 14-car turbo train about to depart for Cairo. The Cooks Timetable shows that express turbos run four times daily in each direction. They are painted in the red, white and black colors of Egypt and display the Egyptian Railways logo in Arabic script on the sides. I also find it interesting that while Egypt has been able to keep its turbos running, Amtrak's are mostly sidelined.

MISR station is a stub-ended affair built about 1926. It consists of an enormous metal latticework train shed and a red brick edifice containing waiting rooms, offices, etc. It obviously dates from the years of British influence. Inside is a tourist bureau staffed by English-speaking personnel who will provide assistance in getting a hotel room, making train reservations for the return trip to Cairo, or arranging tours to El Alamein, where in 1941 one of the most important battles of World War II was fought. Here the British stopped the advancing armies of Rommel's Africa Corps, whose objective was Alexandria and the Suez Canal, then a major lifeline of the British Empire, since vessels bound for India used it. Luckily, General Montgomery and his troops thwarted the "Desert Fox".

MISR station faces a large public square. On one side I saw yellow articulated streetcars winding their way through a huge open-air market area. These vehicles were originally built in the late 1960s by Duewag of then West Germany for Copenhagen, Denmark. A few years later, thanks to pressure from General Motors, the city switched to buses and offered 200 trams for sale at bargain basement prices. The thrifty Egyptians weren't about to let this opportunity slip past, and bought the standard-gauge fleet.

Left: Japanese-built double-deck tram in Alexandria, Egypt on Mar 2.
Below: Former Copenhagen trolley car in Alexandria on Mar 2.
Photos by the author.

Thirty years later, these well-built trolley cars continue to run along with newer Hungarian models. While in Copenhagen they obtained power from pantographs, but in Alexandria they were modified to use traditional trolley poles.

Rather than immediately riding the trams, I proceeded to the Hotel Cecil, where I had a reservation for five nights. The Cecil is yet another relic of the British Empire's days when the sun never set on England's overseas possessions. The present structure was erected in the 1920s, replacing an older hotel with the same name. I am sure that "Cecil" is in honor of Cecil Rhodes, the great British explorer of Africa and one who wanted a "Cape to Cairo" railway built from Capetown, South Africa all the way to Cairo and the Mediterranean. My room with balcony looked over the square where yellow streetcars ran every five minutes. I also had a nice view of the mediterranean. I thought that for a tramway enthusiast this was as close to heaven as I was ever going to get. During World War II, the upper floor of the Hotel Cecil was taken over by the British Army's general staff. In memory of this period, there is now a bar called "Monty's" in honor of Field Marshall Montgomery.

The Hotel Cecil is situated alongside the so called "corniche" or sea wall that was built during the 1890s. A wide promenade allows Alexandrians to stroll next to the blue Mediterranean, taking in the salt air and watching the waves hit. Ships of all types, including cruise liners, are visible, making their way to the dock area. The cruise vessels originate mainly in Italy and Greece. Along the corniche, horse-drawn open carriages are available for hire. Arab couples on honeymoon are the best customers. My purpose here, however, was to ride trams.

Because modern Alexandria is built atop the ruins of the old Green city, there aren't many remains of ancient temples or stadiums. However, there is an amphitheater dating from about 200 A.D., and underground catacombs or tombs can be explored. These were discovered only in recent times. To reach them, I took a streetcar. What used to be the harbor of Cleopatra's reign is now part of the downtown business district. Over the centuries it became silted and eventually part of the land itself. About five years ago, archeologists claimed to have found the foundations of the great lighthouse which lasted until 1300 A.D., when an earthquake toppled it.

Before Nasser's time, Alexandria had an enormous foreign population. Although many of the Greeks, Armenians, Italians, French and British departed when their businesses were nationalized, some have returned. The present government encourages this, since their skills are needed. Thus the city has a cosmopolitan feel that is lacking in Cairo. It's also less visibly Islamic. A multitude of Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches remain standing. As I rode the trams, I passed many of them, most in excellent repair. On certain nights I ate in Egyptian restaurants, but on others I patronized French and Italian establishments. One thing I noticed was that liquor was available in them.

The streetcar system, which I was determined to ride *in toto*, consists of two divisions. The yellow cars run from downtown mainly to the western sections of the city. The ex-Copenhagen cars plus two newer models of Hungarian trams are used. All are trolley-pole equipped. During the 1960s, a group of PCCs was acquired from Toronto, Canada, but these are gone now. Unlike Cairo, which is meter gauge, Alexandria has always used standard gauge. There is no "one-day pass", but fares are very low. Conductors collect the money and issue a ticket. Traditional gongs are used.

The blue division is the so-called Ramleh network, which extends from Ramleh Square in the downtown area near the Hotel Cecil to the resort of San Stefano and Victoria College, a British-operated prep school. The Ramleh system was built during the 1890s as a steam tramway, but was converted to electricity in 1903. It has no street running and its cars have pantographs. One is its unique features is the use of double-deck vehicles, which are used in consists with single-deckers. Today the only other double-deck streetcars run in Blackpool, England and in Hong Kong. At one time they were common throughout the British Colonial possessions. Alexandria's were built in 1994 in Japan. They replaced older models that were mainly wooden.

I rode the Ramleh tram to San Stefano, an old resort that includes a fine restaurant plus casino. If it were in Cairo, gambling would be prohibited, but in more liberal Alexandria the government allows it. About 50% of its patrons are foreigners and the rest wealthy Arabs.

From San Stefano I took a taxi a distance of 15 miles to a place called Montanzeh, where the palace and gardens of Farouk, Egypt's last monarch, are situated. After exploring it I return to the city on a suburban train that stopped adjacent to the entrance to the gardens. It was an interesting circle trip. The Alexandria tourist office has available an excellent map showing the tramways and suburban railways plus key bus routes.

I returned to Cairo the same way I had left—aboard a Turboliner. The trip was uneventful and arrival was on time. Except during the high summer season, Egypt is a reasonably priced destination for tourists, with many hotels in the $35-per-night range. I recommend it.

Circus Trains, Shortlines, Narrow Gauge and Amtrak

By Miles Post

(Concluded from last issue.)

We took a city transit bus to General Mitchell International Airport, rented another car, and drove to Baraboo, WI to be in position to ride Circus World Museum's Great Circus Train '98 on its two-day trek from there back to Milwaukee. This would be the first time the general public would be allowed to ride the train. By using Highway 113 between Madison and Baraboo, we were able to parallel the ex-CNW line we would be riding the following day. Near Okee we were treated to a free ride across the Wisconsin River aboard the Colsac II, a nifty little ferry with a capacity for twelve vehicles.

Monday, July 27: Owned by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Circus World Museum is located at the former winter quarters of the Ringling Bros. Circus in Baraboo. This town is a little over 10 miles from Wisconsin Dells, one of the biggest resort / tourist regions in the Midwest. The Circus Train's annual trek to Milwaukee for the Great Circus Parade is a significant tourist draw in the state during the summer, for both visitors and locals. In years past, the train has been pulled by steam power and has had prominent corporate sponsorship. One year, a beer company had their huge corporate logo proudly displayed on the steam locomotive's tender, obscuring just about everything else. I could just imagine: "Look, Mommy! Here comes the Duff Beer Train!" Was "Rule G" suspended that day in the interest of keeping the sponsor happy?

My July 1956 Official Guide shows CNW serving Baraboo with five passenger trains eastbound and four westbound. Today, about the only business on the line is the Mid-Continent Railway Museum and a massive rock quarry near Reedsburg that supplies railroad ballast. The track west of there, to Winona Jct. and Wyeville, has been abandoned. The Dakota "400", Rochester Special and Duluth - Superior Limited, very much alive in 1956, are now just "Ghost Trains" to the hikers walking along the "rails-to-trails" pathways. Since October 1996, Wisconsin & Southern Railroad (WSOR) has been leasing this line from Union Pacific between Madison and Reedsburg. This line

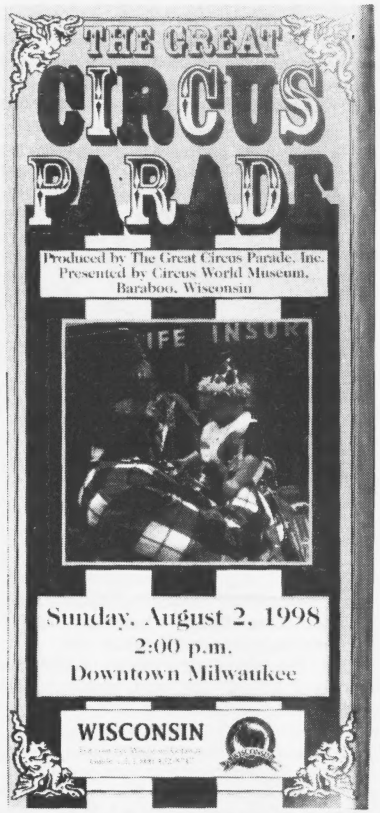
appears in UP's October 29, 1995 employee timetable as the outer extremity of their Harvard Subdivision.

Our WSOR locomotives and cars were coupled to the front of the circus train, and E-9A's 10C and 10A would have their work cut out for them pulling a train that totaled 31 cars and a caboose. The WSOR passenger equipment up front consisted of baggage car Northern Pass, coaches City of Horicon, City of Janesville and City of Milwaukee, dormitory Northern Plains, sleeper Northern Nites and dome-open platform Northern View. The City of Milwaukee is owned and lettered for Northern Sky Charters. All of the cars have UP heritage and have been refurbished by Northern Rail Car, a sister company of Wisconsin & Southern. The coaches were equipped with closed-circuit television monitors and the camera was positioned on the nose of the lead unit. This allowed us an "engineer's eye view" of the right-of-way and gave us a "sneak preview" of what we would be viewing from our side windows. For Operation Lifesaver specials, this arrangement helps to illustrate the number of close calls with vehicles at grade crossings.

The circus train itself consisted of six heavyweight passenger cars modified for various uses, 18 friction-bearing equipped flatcars loaded with the ornate turn-of-the-century circus wagons, an animal transport car and, a rarity in 1998, a bay window caboose.

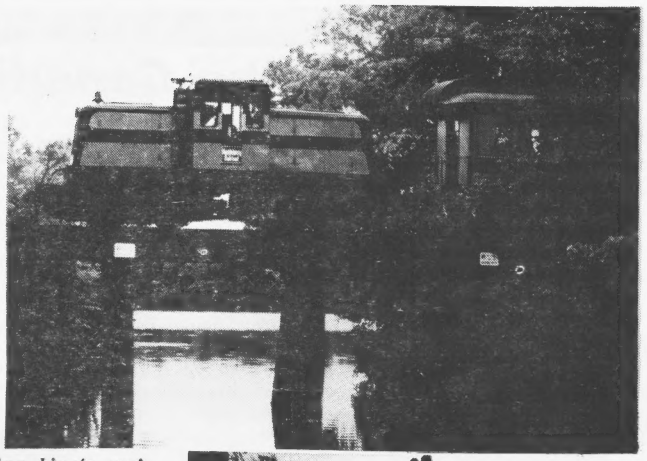
Shortly after our departure from Baraboo, we made the first of several stops, with the crew members keeping a close watch for shifted loads and overheated journals. At Merrimac, while crossing the Wisconsin River on an impressive bridge, we presented quite a sight to pleasure craft owners and patrons of the ferry we rode the previous day. Upon arrival in Madison, the state capital, we stopped briefly on the north side of town for a large crowd of onlookers. Three miles out of town, thanks to a new connector track built by WSOR, we switched off the former CNW line onto the former MILW Twenty-first subdivision of their Wisconsin Division. This interlocking was recognized by CNW as "MX Crossing", while MILW referred to it as "Monona Tower." This location has been often photographed over the years by railfan photographers, and for good reason. Where else could one find a diamond interlocking and control tower situated on a "X-shaped" earthen causeway in the middle of a lake, with a state capitol building in the background? When compared to old photographs, it's hard to recognize the location today, as a new highway has been built adjacent to the railroad causeway across Lake Monona.

At Milton Jct. we turned south and headed the short distance to Janesville for



another large crowd of onlookers. When, or if, the proposed Amtrak service between Chicago and Madison becomes a reality, this will probably be the route used, as the ex-CNW line via Evansville and Brooklyn is now dormant and used for freight car storage. At Anderson, we switched to the ex-CNW Janesville Spur for the last 3.5 miles into Janesville (honest and truly, Rick!). The parallel MILW line has been abandoned. I bailed off the train at Janesville and met up with a friend who was chasing it by auto. The train shoved back to Milton Jct. to tie up for the night, but not before some switching maneuvers to rearrange certain flatcars for ease in unloading the next day in Milwaukee. The low sun yielded some nice photos of the E units being used as switch engines, which in and of itself is a rarity.

Tuesday, July 28: After spending the night at the Janesville Motel 6, we began the second day of our journey, boarding the train at Milton Jct. Our jaunt up the former MILW Twenty-sixth Subdivision initiated a very circuitous routing into Milwaukee. In downtown Waukesha, we used about one-half mile of the ex-CNW Waukesha Spur to gain access to the Wisconsin Central's Chicago Subdivision. Several years ago, the



(Right:) Huckleberry Railroad 45-tonner no. 7 pulling train across Genesee Trestle with Mott Lake in the background, on July 25.

(Center:) Rail America GP38-2 no. 204 "Spirit of America" on Farmer's Festival Special at Pigeon MI on July 25.

(Lower:) Wisconsin & Southern E units perform switching duties at Milton Jct WI with the Great Circus Train '98 on July 27. These are the engines that powered the Bill Gates private train reported on last issue. Photos by the author.

Chicago Sub used to be Soo Line's main route into Illinois before they did a "route-structure swap" with the bankrupt Milwaukee Road and the newly formed, reborn Wisconsin Central Limited. The 20.5 miles we covered between Grand Avenue and Rugby Jct. was "old" mileage for me, as I'd ridden over this stretch on Clark Johnson's Montana "Explorers III" on July 9, 1989, albeit at night. At Rugby Jct., we switched to the former MILW Twelfth Subdivision for 12.4 miles to Granville. There, we switched from trackage operated by Wisconsin & Southern to former CNW track still operated by Union Pacific. UP's Granville Branch took us 5.4 miles to Wiscona, where we switched to their Milwaukee Subdivision to our final destination of St. Francis, the unloading point on the south side of the city. Other than the "Denver Post" special that recently ran from Denver to Cheyenne, I figured that our Great Circus Train '98 was the only other special passenger move over the UP in 1998 that was open to the public. I'm not including the American Orient Express in my calculations, because, technically, that's an Amtrak special movement, operating under Amtrak-established agreements with the freight railroads. My new mileage ended on the north side of Butler Yard at BJ Interlocking. An excursion behind UP's 844 Northern brought me here from Berkley, IL on August 31, 1996.

While passing through Butler Yard we stopped briefly to pick up Wisconsin Governor and Amtrak Board member Tommy Thompson so that he could ride the last 15.3 miles. Was he content with only 15.3 miles? Did anyone ask him if he wanted to ride the entire distance from Baraboo? Gosh! I wonder if there was a "staged media event" at St. Francis? Do you suppose anyone remembered to tip off the news media that the Governor would be arriving on the circus train? Needless to say, with the Governor on board, UP managed to untangle their otherwise-congested tracks long enough to give us green signals all the way! That's it! The Surface Transportation Board should require that state governors ride every UP train, and voila! No more lousy service!

My childhood dream of "running away and joining the circus" now fulfilled, I did not find it necessary to hang around for the Great Circus Parade that would wend its way through downtown Milwaukee on August 2nd. Instead, I taxied my way from St. Francis to General Mitchell International Airport and flew home on America West Flight 398 MKE-LAS (a 737-3G7, N158AW), connecting to America West Flight 2646 LAS-ONT (a 737-277, N187AW). I considered this a good trip, highlighted with a little mixture of everything. Word has it that next year the Great Circus Train 99 may take an exotic routing to Milwaukee, possibly via Green Bay. Oh boy! More new mileage!

Reinventing the *Canadian*

By Andrew C. Selden

Tourism is a huge component of the US economy. A very large portion of this business occurs with America's single trade partner, Canada. In 1997, according to the Canadian tourism Commission, 13,401,000 travelers arrived in Canada from the US and 15,127,000 travelers left Canada for the US. Canada estimated the value of this travel at more than $12 billion (Canadian dollars), and total tourism spending in Canada at $44 billion (Cdn), up 4.4% from 1996. In the US, according to industry sources, total tourism spending in 1997 came to $502 billion, of whhich $94 billion was from foreign visitors to the US, of whom the largest share came from Canada. Modal shares (in the US) for tourism in 1997: air 17%, bus 1%, train 1%, motor vehicle 80%. Amtrak largely ignores this business. An estimated 2.5 million Canadians visit Florida each year, for example, yet Amtrak doesn't operate so much as a through coach to Florida from Toronto or Montreal.

But there is an even more lucrative rail passenger business opportunity for cross-border passenger trains that both Amtrak and VIA have failed to address, and there are both historic and current models of how that market can be developed successfully. The current experience with the "fourth *Eagle*", a weekly Chicago-L.A. train operating via San Antonio on the route and schedule of the tri-weekly *Eagle* and *Sunset Limited*, has been successful, operationally and financially. We can use that success as a model for a northern counterpart.

Even though less-than-daily trains are grossly inefficient in most markets, there are rare situations that do tend to support less-than-daily services. One of those is for clearly seasonal tourist business over routes that are already served by a daily train providing basic intercity travel service, where very little or no additional infrastructure (stations, crew bases, maintenance facilities, railroad facilities, etc.) is needed to launch the service. That is the case with the "fourth *Eagle*", a train that makes no sense at all viewed in isolation, but one that is a financial winner as an increment to a base system (supported in that case by express business more than tourism).

The idea is to operate a fourth, weekly, *Canadian* through from Toronto to Vancouver, but between Toronto and Winnipeg to operate it via Detroit, Chicago and St. Paul-Minneapolis rather than the desolate wilderness of northern Ontario. This train might be launched as a summer seasonal train at first, and it should use Superliner trainsets. A single trainset could cover this assignment, provided it was rotated out at Chicago every second or third trip for maintenance. With a single set, the schedule would require same-day turns in Vancouver and overnight turns in Toronto. A better plan would be to muster two trainsets, extend the western terminus to Seattle, and maintain the sets there. A minimum consist for this train would be baggage and dormitory cars, three coaches, lounge, diner and three sleepers. Anything less than that can't generate enough revenue to pay for the train.

On-board service crews would change at Winnipeg, just as they do on the *Canadian*, with Amtrak crews working the train between Winnipeg, Chicago and Toronto, and VIA crews west of Winnipeg.

This train should operate on the same schedule as VIA's *Canadian* west of Winnipeg. If it does so, the schedule would look roughly like this:

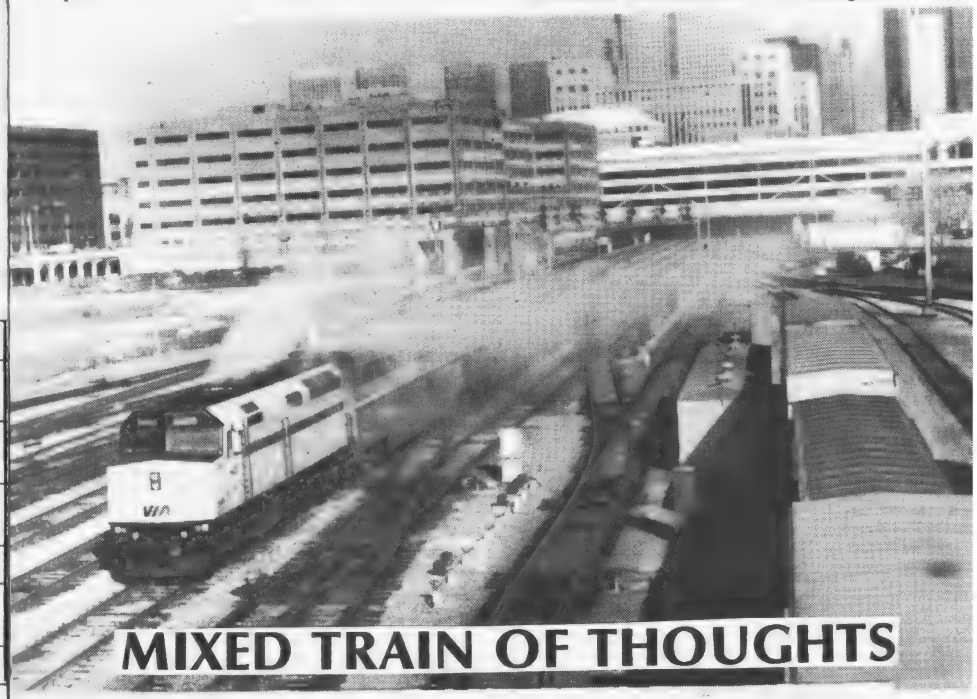
10:00 a.m. ↑	Toronto ↓	21:00
16:15 16:30	Detroit	15:00 14:30
21:45 22:15	Chicago	08:30 08:00
9:30 10:00	Minneapolis	23:30 23:00
19:00	Winnipeg	14:00
09:00 10:00	Vancouver	18:00 17:00
13:55	Seattle	13:05

The collateral benefits of this schedule are obvious. It adds (albeit on a once-a-week basis) Chicago-Twin Cities-Winnipeg service, where the local traffic volume between those cities by itself would never support a stand-along Chicago-Winnipeg train. It adds a second Chicago-Twin Cities frequency on a desirable and easy overnight schedule. It adds an incremental frequency between Chicago and Detroit and a second Chicago-Toronto schedule and route, again where local traffic would not by itself pay for a new train. As traffic volumes in the local sub-markets grow over time, additional local Toronto-Chicago-Winnipeg train frequencies can be justified as purely Amtrak trains, offering a cross-platform connection at Winnipeg to the VIA transcontinental *Canadian*.

The main marketplace force driving the success of this new train is also obvious: the en-route population between Winnipeg and Toronto on the *Canadian*'s current route through the forests of northern Ontario (at least west of Sudbury, ON) is about 20. On the US routing, it's closer to 20 million, plus the synergism of connecting traffic feeds available at Amtrak's biggest national hub at Chicago. It is a reasonably safe bet that 200 folks would use rail to access the mountains of western Canada each week in the peak tourist seasons. Arrow can be programmed to block shorter-distance reservations as needed to protect space for the 2000-mile trips. Or, in a radical departure from current practice, perhaps Amtrak could add cars to accommodate demand for shorter trips.

Our analysis suggests that this train would produce a positive net cash flow on operations (including all equipment capital costs) from its first trip. It would show a loss on Amtrak's books after Amtrak does its customary allocation of system fixed costs and NEC costs against the service. Nevertheless, it does represent an opportunity to both Amtrak and VIA to generate some badly needed positive cash flow as well as good public relations from a natural market opportunity for long-haul train service.

Andrew Selden is President of the
Minnesota Association of RR Passengers



MIXED TRAIN OF THOUGHTS

The Amtrak *International* leaves Chicago behind VIA F40 #6420. Photo by Alex Mayes.

Amtrak's new national timetable shows that the schedule for the *Southwest Chief* will be subject to change Dec 1. However, this will actually occur Oct 25, the date of the national timetable. Amtrak's Arrow computer shows this change as being an added 28 minutes at Winslow AZ, which an internal Amtrak source says is for switching of mail and express, which Amtrak will carry between Chicago and Phoenix. In mid-October the *Southwest Chief* dropped off a RoadRailer at Winslow; the trailer went by road to Phoenix and was to return via an eastbound train about a week later.

Union Pacific Corporation reported on Oct 22 its first profitable quarter in a year. The company announced third-quarter net income of $38 million; or 15 cents a share, higher than most analysts' estimates. The earnings were 85% lower than the $240 million, or 96 cents a share, that the company reported in the 1997 third quarter.

Speaking at the Transportation Table luncheon sponsored by the Journal of Commerce and Traffic World magazine, Ed Ellis, Amtrak VP-mail and express, announced plans to increase the company's cargo revenue to $107 million in the current fiscal year by nearly tripling express traffic to $29 million annually from $10 million in FY 98. During FY 97 Amtrak generated only $4 million in express revenue and $66 million from

carrying mail. Ellis emphasized that cargo revenue still would represent less than 10% of Amtrak's overall revenue for the current year. At $107 million annually, mail and express revenue would still fall well below the railroad's one-time goal of over $400 million. Ellis said that there has been a 15% compound monthly increase since May 1998 when a Surface Transportation Board ruling gave Amtrak wide latitude to handle express. He also emphasized current efforts to cooperate with freight railroads, saying "Without cooperation from the freight railroads, we wouldn't have a service we can sell".

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More on the Texas ARP's proposed reroute of the *Texas Eagle* from its current Ft. Worth-San Antonio route to one from Ft. Worth to El Paso on the UP Baird Subdivision (see last issue):

TXARP lists several advantages to the proposed West Texas reroute:

(1) Direct operation will reduce operating expense by reducing train-miles, in addition to a 10-hour reduction in running time.

(2) Because of the shorter running time, the Texas Eagle could serve as an alternate to the Southwest Chief for travel between Chicago and Los Angeles, and would be the preferred route for St. Louis-Los Angeles travel instead of a connection at Kansas City.

(3) West of El Paso, the 10-hour schedule difference between the California Service Texas Eagle and the Sunset Limited would provide a choice of travel times for passengers.

(4) The population base Fort Worth-El Paso is substantially higher than San Antonio-El Paso, which would work towards increased ridership.

(5) The UP Baird Sub is undergoing a $125 million upgrade, and being east-west would be less affected than the current route by growing NAFTA freight traffic to/from Mexico.

(6) The rerouted train would operate over one contracting railroad from Joliet to Los Angeles, eliminating the need to coordinate schedules where carriers change.

Several of the cities along the proposed route were instrumental in generating support during the proceedings leading to the loan which the state of Texas made to Amtrak to continue operation of the Texas Eagle in 1997. U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson (R.-Tx.) has come on board with the West Texas idea, saying, "I applaud Abilene's creativity and farsightedness in pursuing rail and will be supportive of the city's effort."—Gene Poon.

The *California Zephyr* has had its engine assignment reduced from three to two since about mid-October. Otherwise, the consists have remained the same, with plenty of mail/express on the rear. Interestingly, there has been no deleterious effect on timekeeping. Delays to trains 5&6 during that time have been for reasons other than lack of power, such as no crew, broken rails, etc. If anything, the trains have been running closer to schedule than before.

Amtrak mail-express VP Ed Ellis said in a speech in late October that Amtrak is less than 60 days away from resolving nagging mechanical problems with its express boxcars. The main problem has been with empty boxcars that "bounce" on track that is marginally suitable for 79mph passenger trains. The solution is a modification to the trucks on the cars. The problems have forced Amtrak to run strings of empty boxcars at 55mph in special trains to balance inventories of equipment, instead of running them in passenger trains.

Dallas Area Rapid Transit workers on Oct 23 were transporting a water pump on a dolly when it fell onto the tracks in a tunnel just north of downtown Dallas. DART officials said the workers did not have time to move the gasoline-powered pump off the tracks before it was struck by a light rail train carrying 45 passengers. Another train was used to evacuate the passengers. Seven of them were hospitalized, but none with serious injuries.

Oklahoma City report from the TV news there Oct 20 says that work crews will move into the Santa Fe station in that city on Oct 26 to begin restoration. It said that there are six months to ready the building for Amtrak, a reference to the planned startup of service through Oklahoma to Fort Worth.

The sabotage derailment of the *Sunset Limited* in Arizona in 1995 continues to be a top FBI priority, and the reward for info in the case has risen from $120,000 to $320,000. Federal authorities said the case is one of the most "intensive law enforcement probes on record", and possible new evidence was uncovered after a number of unrelated tips were received. The (Phoenix) Arizona Republic on Oct 11 reported that FBI agents pulled an off-road vehicle from an abandoned mine shaft on Oct 10, and that they believe that the vehicle will provide clues to the derailment.

Incidentally, the following is an interesting quote from the newspaper: "Purveyors of survivalist-type literature say there isn't a lot of readily available information on how to sabotage a rail line. 'The main popular stuff now is how to make your own explosives,' said Doug Parshall, manager of Royal Bookstore in Phoenix. 'Frankly, railroads are so damn old-fashioned.'"

NARP has a new House of Reps voting record chart on its Web page. See it at www.narprail.org/house.htm. An X is an anti-rail vote, while a dash means not voting.

The Canon City and Royal Gorge Railroad ran its first train through Colorado's Royal Gorge on Oct 17. The 3-car train was powered by ex-C&NW 403, in a fresh new Rio Grande-inspired paint scheme. CC&RG crews and invited guests made four round trips through the Gorge between Canon City and Parkdale for the purpose of training crew members and qualifying locomotive engineers. Trailing the 403 were three ex-VIA Rail coaches, one of them lettered for the CC&RG. Sister F-unit 402 (also ex-C&NW) is being rebuilt in Pueblo and is expected to be ready in the spring before the May startup of the tourist season. In operation, the units will always be in the lead.—Joe McMillan.

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NARP reported as follows on the final passage by Congress of the federal budget for the now-current fiscal year (see also Amtrak's statement on page 22). President Clinton promptly signed the bill into law: At last Congress passed the Omnibus Spending Bill that includes $609,230,000 for Amtrak in Fiscal 1999—the House on Oct 20, the Senate on Oct 21. Amtrak got half a loaf in its efforts to expand the definition of capital. The money can be used for maintenance of equipment, but not for maintenance of way. Amtrak said in a release in mid-October that it would continue to push for the broader definition it had sought in the future.

The bill provides $450,000 for the Amtrak Reform Council and prohibits the Council from spending this money on consultants. The law reinforces the Council's pre-existing right to identify potential route closures in its annual report to Congress. The law says that for purposes of this exercise, the Council should assume that Amtrak subsidies will decline in the years through 2002.

The law deletes the Senate-passed requirement that the NE Corridor get at least $200 million from capital grants, and that general capital would get at least $355 million. Likewise, the report deletes House-passed language requiring the two appropriations committees to approve Amtrak's capital plan before Amtrak gets the money.

Report language admonishes Amtrak to focus on increased community coordination along the NE Corridor, where there have been problems or concerns, such as Attleboro, Foxboro, Mansfield and Sharon MA. Regarding the railroad between Brattleboro and White River Jct VT, Amtrak is urged to continue negotiating with the state of Vermont and the New England Central RR on upgrading the pole line signal system to an electronic control system. Costs should be shared among the users and not borne solely by Amtrak, says the report.

The report cites the need at the Erie PA station of repairs to platforms, canopies and lights, and better access to the track to comply with ADA. Amtrak is strongly urged to consider funding rehab and renovations at Erie when selecting projects for state and local partnerships in Fiscal 99.

Regarding extension of the NEC to Richmond VA, Amtrak is directed to report its findings to the Appropriations Committee by Mar 1, 1999. As to L.A.-Las Vegas service the report said "The conferees are supportive of this project and expect that the number of capitalization issues surrounding necessary infrastructure upgrades for Amtrak to operate on this route will be quickly resolved." This presumably is a message to Union Pacific.

The Omnibus Bill also includes $1 million for study of a Dayton OH rail transit system that would link downtown with Wright-Patterson AFB and Dayton's inner west side. An Oct 9 release from Rep. Tony Hall, the Ohio Democrat, says the line would follow the historic route the Wright Brothers took from their home to the field where they conducted their flying experiments. If the study supports the rail link, Congress could later grant construction funds.—NARP.

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The Amtrak Board in late October approved a 4-year business plan to create a "more vibrant modern national rail system" and to "achieve operational self-sufficiency". The plan aims to keep the national system, supported by passenger and mail/express revenues, and including projected net annual revenues of $180 million from the NEC high-speed service by the end of 2002. The plan assumes a national network of high-speed and commuter corridors plus medium and long-distance routes with a profitable mix of services on them and that can be sustained by other revenue sources such as state support and mail/express. Specific routes other than corridors are not named in the plan, but a market-based analysis, now being conducted, is mentioned, to evaluate which services and amenities are important to customers.

Heavy rains began in southern Texas on Oct 17, creating flooding that continued for a number of days, wreaking havoc with *Sunset Limited* and *Texas Eagle* schedules and operation.

The DOT announced Oct 27 a $2.5 million grant to upgrade the Turboliner equipment, improving the turbines, that is being rebuilt for use in NY State.

Here's the timetable for selection of a permanent president of Amtrak: short list of candidates to be announced Oct 27; formal interviews Nov 11; announce final choice Nov 16.

News in this issue is updated through Oct 30. Contributors to this issue included Gene Poon, Alan Feinstein, Pete Roehm & Ray Saunders

MIDWEST REPORT

The Cleveland/Columbus Rail Initiative has less than a year and a half before the startup of a two-year rail passenger project linking the two cities. Ohio DOT has said it could fund $32 million in startup costs and an operating subsidy of $3.3 million annually. ODOT would contract with Amtrak to operate the trains.

Current proposals call for a one-way fare of $27 between Cleveland and Columbus, with stops in downtown Columbus, Worthington, Delaware, Galion, Berea and Cleveland. The Cleveland/Columbus Rail Initiative has been studying schedules and fare structures to determine frequency of operation.

What may delay the startup past the spring 2000 proposed date would be the reluctance of freight railroads to allow the passenger service. Although aware of the state's plan, railroad executives have not been overly cooperative during early planning stages. Significant upgrades and additional passing tracks will be needed for the 79mph, multiple-frequency service being envisioned.

Ray Lang, Amtrak intercity manager of government affairs, suggested the need to speed up the planning process. In an Oct 19 meeting he told planners, "We're sitting here telling you what we think, but once the railroad companies come out, it could be a whole different ball game."

A high-speed service linking Kansas City, Tulsa, Oklahoma City and Fort Worth has been proposed by Oklahoma State Senator Dave Herbert, Rep. Ed McKechnie of Pittsburg KS, and a Texas legislator, who are forming a group to lobby state officials and Amtrak toward that goal.

"We believe there is strong support for restoring passenger service between the two states. It's critical that we spend tax dollars wisely and get the most bang for our buck," said McKechnie.

Rep. Ron Clark of Texas, and Gainesville TX officials have reportedly also signed onto the project. The currently-planned Amtrak service to be restored to the area in 1999 would not serve Tulsa except by a Thruway bus.

Lost in the recent news of a proposed $185 million upgrade of Empire Corridor service is a small component that Amtrak is considering including. Depending on the amount of interest it sees, Amtrak may extend one NYC-Buffalo/Niagara Falls round trip to Erie and Cleveland.

While the extension to Cleveland is not a high priority in the massive improvement plan for the Empire Corridor, it may happen as early as 2000. At a recent meeting of the Empire State Passengers Ass'n (ESPA), Amtrak Empire Service Product Line Manger Wes Coates said that, to keep costs down, he would want to use a Turboliner for the extension, which would not require turning at Cleveland, since the Turbos have an engine at each end. Although all seven Turboliners are to be restored as part of the Empire Service improvement project, service to Cleveland will not happen until at least three Turboliners are rebuilt for use in the Empire Corridor.

However, the Ohio ARP (OARP) has learned that, while Mr. Coates and other Amtrak officials are willing to consider the extension, they are not yet convinced of the market's potential. For this reason, OARP and ESPA are suggesting that people who want this service should write to: George Warrington, Amtrak President, 60 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Washington DC 20002. For more info on the proposed train extension, call the 24-hr OARP hotline at 614-470-0334.—Craig O'Connell.

Plans to return Amtrak to Kansas City Union Station have been derailed by lack of funds. The former station is to reopen as a science museum next year, but plans to have Amtrak use the building as its Kansas City station have been shelved. The building's owner, the Union Station Assistance Corp., set aside space for station facilities, and Amtrak agreed to seek funds to do the necessary construction, which would include a covered walkway from the new waiting room to the tracks, which now pass alongside the building on the north side, replacing the many tracks that once ran through the massive structure.

Former Amtrak president Thomas Downs, a Kansas City native, was in favor of the plan. But Downs resigned under fire from his own board of directors, and current Amtrak officials are no longer participating in the project. They have agreed to operate the station once it is built, but someone else must obtain the funds to build it.

Union Station Assistance Corp. and the county government are seeking federal aid to build the station anyway. The estimated cost is $5 million. Amtrak now occupies a small station/waiting room inside a parking garage.

Amtrak and Greyhound were to introduce motorcoach service between San Antonio and Brownsville TX on Oct 25, connecting the latter with Amtrak train service at San Antonio. The buses also are to serve the intermediate communities of McAllen and Alice TX. In Brownsville the service originates at the Greyhound terminal at 1134 E. St. Charles and continued through McAllen (120 S. 16th St) and Alice (301 N. Johnson St) to the San Antonio Amtrak station at 224 Hoffgen St. The northbd Thruway bus meets the westbd *Sunset Ltd* and the northbd *Texas Eagle*, while the southbd bus connects from the southbd *Texas Eagle*.—Amtrak.

Amtrak and DOTs of nine states have produced a draft study that concludes that a high-speed rail passenger network across the states could cut travel time and produce more frequent service. Amtrak Intercity president Lee Bullock said "As the region continues to grow, traffic congestion on area roadways will only worsen." The report found that 110mph speeds would cut two hours from the Chicago-Detroit travel time. The network would link cities in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio and Wisconsin. To bring it to full-scale operation would require $3.5 billion in federal and state funding. "The economic benefits to the region more than outweigh the necessary capital investment", Bullock said.

The *Cardinal* is being slowed by about 30mins between Chicago and Indianapolis by more padding from Chicago to Dyer (10mins) and a slowdown of CSX's Monon Sub Dyer-Crawfordsville (120 miles, 20mins more). The train's top speed fell from 79mph to 60 with the Oct 25 change. Chicago-Indianapolis becomes a 5.5hr trip, compared to 3hrs by highway.—C. O'Connell.

RAIL FANTRIPS

Dec 5 or 12: Christmas Lights Spectacular. Atk from Dearborn or Royal Oak MI to Crossroads Village, ride narrow gauge steam, family-style dinner at Bavarian Inn, Frankenmuth. Christmas displays. $64. Bluewater MI Chap NRHS, Box 296, Royal Oak MI 48068. (800) 594-5162 to order.

Dec 26-Jan 1, 1999: Baltimore, Maryland. Capitol Ltd from Chicago. 4 nights Mt. Vernon Hotel, on your own in Baltimore to explore. No meals or group tours incl. Same train return, with New Yrs celebration aboard. $385 up. 20th Century RR Club, 329 W 18th St, Ste 902, Chicago IL 60616.

Jan 30 & 31: 1999 Big Railroad Hobby Show, Eastern States Expos. Grounds, Better Living Center & the Young Bldg, Memorial Ave., West Springfield MA. 9am-5pm. $6. Sponsor: Amherst Rwy Soc, Box 718, Warren MA 01083. Phone (413) 436-0242.Robert A. Buck, show director.

Feb 27: Vermont Snow Express. From Boston & suburban stations to Brattleboro & Bellows Falls, annual train, one day only. Ticket order info out in Dec. Massachusetts Bay RR Enthusiasts Inc., PO Box 8136, Ward Hill MA 01835.

Apr 7-18: Alaska by Rail. White Pass & Yukon steam rotary snowplow operation, Alaska RR by private train. Priv White Pass train of vintage parlor cars; Budd cars on Alaska RR. Complete tours Juneau-Anchorage $2345. Mountain Outin' Tours, Box 70, E. Irvine CA 92650. 800-844-3985

Send large SASE to addresses. One listing in RTN is free. It must give specific dates of operation. Write: Rail Travel News, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709 or E-mail rtn@trainweb.com

CARS & CONSISTS

***American Orient Express**, Pittsfield MA Sep 22: engines 301 & 291 (Amtrak F40s); cars 800643 "San Antonio" baggage-crew, 800668 "Grand Canyon" & (no number) "Pacific Star" crew sleepers, 800050 "San Francisco" diner, 800231 "Monte Carlo", 800255 "Berlin" & 800298 "Paris" sleepers, 800311 "Rocky Mountain" club car, 800301 "Zurich" & 800308 "Chicago" diners, 800310 "Seattle" club car, 800109 "Vienna", 800297 "Istanbul" & 800258 "Washington" sleepers, 800321 "New York" parlor/observation car. Train parked overnight Sep 21-22 on Conrail track 4, North Adams Jct, west of CP147. Passengers took bus to various Berkshire County attractions. Train left 7:45pm westbd, 20mins behind Amtrak 449.—Kevin Gregoire.

***Canadian**, VIA Rail train 1, out of Toronto Oct 20: engines 6449 & 6441 (F40s); cars 8604 baggage, 8112, 8120 & 8126 coaches, 8509 Skyline dome for coach psgrs, 8517 Skyline dome-diner for Silver & Blue class, sleepers 8331 "Jarvis Manor", 8337 "Osler Manor", 8324 "Dunsmuir Manor", 8321 "Draper Manor", 8500 Skyline dome-diner, sleepers 8336 "Monck Manor", 8332 "Laird Manor", 8311 "Burton Manor", 8209 "Chateau Iberville", 8402 "Alexandria" 48-seat diner, sleepers 8318 "Craig Manor", 8226 "Chateau Salaberry", 8302 "Allan Manor", 8329 "Hearne Manor", 8714 "Strathcona Park" dome observation. Train on time Winnipeg Oct 21, full psgr load.—Jack Wait.

***Empire Builder**, train 7, ar St. Paul Sep 14: engines 76, 23 (P42s) & 821 (P40); cars 1258 baggage, Superliners 39020, 32043, 32006, 38018, 34101, 31525, 33020, 34029, 31036, 32053, (off at St. Paul:) 34085 & 34008. Car 34085 added to train 8 on Sep 15.—J.A. Chenault.

Text of Amtrak Press Release on Congressional Funding Approval

Washington DC—Amtrak today (Oct 16) commended Congress for coming to an agreement to fully fund Amtrak by providing $609 million for Fiscal Year 1999."Amtrak is pleased that Congress has reaffirmed its commitment to a national passenger rail system and to Amtrak's strategic business plan, which will create a more modern national rail system and achieve operatingn self-sufficiency by 2002", said George D. Warrington, acting president and CEO of Amtrak.

These goals are within reach if Congress and the Administration keep their commitment to provide a steady flow of capital investment funds for the railroad, including the $609 million contained in the Omnibus Appropriations bill.

Congress, however, did not clearly affirm the railroad's ability to spend the capital appropriation in the same manner as every other transportation mode. Amtrak will continue to seek clarification of this issue, since flexibility in capital spending is critical to Amtrak's ability to reach operating self-sufficiency.

Last year, Congress committed itself to provide adequate capital investment funds, a new leadership team, and a gradually declining level of funding for day-to-day operations. For its part, Amtrak responded with a strategic business plan, major reforms, and new market-driven, customer-focused strategies that have increased ridership and improved the Corporation's bottom line.

In the coming weeks, Amtrak expects to announce the biggest ridership gains in a decade for the recently-ended fiscal year (Oct 97-Sep 98) and its Fiscal Year 1999-2002 Strategic Business Plan... Amtrak trains and connecting Thruway Motorcoaches serve more than 500 communities in 45 states. An additional 48 million customers use commuter services operated by Amtrak under contract to regional transportation authorities.

Text of Amtrak Press Release on Fall Schedule Changes

Washington DC-New Amtrak passenger train schedules will better meet the needs of customers by providing additional and more convenient service in several regions, including the return of daytime service between Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Toledo and Chicago. The schedule changes, which coincide with the change to standard time, will take effect Oct. 25.

The new timetables for Amtrak will feature the extension of the New York City-Pittsburgh *Pennsylvanian,* operating daily on a new daytime schedule between Philadelphia and Chicago via Pittsburgh and Cleveland, effective Nov. 7. Amtrak will replace the *Pennsylvanian's* New York-Philadelphia segment on Oct. 25 with a new northbound and southbound Keystone Service train running on the *Pennsylvanian's* former schedule.

Amtrak will add 19 Keystone Service trains a week between Harrisburg, Philadelphia and New York (including the new service running on the *Pennsylvanian's* former schedule), raising the weekly total from 82 trains to 101 trains.

In Western New York State, Amtrak will increase train frequency to four round trips daily from New York City to Buffalo and Niagara Falls. On Nov. 16, Amtrak will begin serving the new Syracuse intermodal transportation center, providing closer access to downtown Syracuse and Syracuse University. The new facility will also be served by the *Lake Shore Limited,* which under the new timetable, will depart Chicago at 7:30pm instead of 8:15pm, en route to New York and Boston.

In the Midwest, the westbound *Empire Builder* from Chicago to Seattle and Portland will depart at 2:15pm instead of the current 3pm departure, to provide an earlier arrival in Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN. The westbound *Southwest Chief* from Chicago to Los Angeles will depart at 3:45pm instead of the current departure of 4:40pm, to provide an earlier arrival in Kansas City, MO.

In the West, Amtrak's San Diego-Los Angeles *San Diegans* will add an additional frequency on Oct. 25, increasing the total number of daily round trips between the cities to 11. Amtrak's Colfax/Sacramento-Oakland-San Jose *Capitols,* now offered in partnership with the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Board, will also add one frequency, bumping that service's total up to five round-trips daily. The addition of both services will result in minor time adjustments for all frequencies throughout both the *San Diegan* and *Capitol* schedules.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"Once threatened with demolition, gnawed by decades of urban grime, obscured by ungainly advertising signs, corroded by roof leaks and just plain unloved by the 500,000 people who spring through its cavernous halls each day on the way to somewhere else, Grand Central Terminal celebrated its rebirth yesterday as a lustrous train station that ranks as a destination in its own right."

—Susan Sachs in New York Times October 2.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"San Jose A teenager was killed after being struck by a freight train while walking with his brother along railroad tracks here Saturday."

—San Francisco Examiner October 11.

(Who would kill a poor guy who had just been hit by a freight train?)

U.S. WASTES ENERGY AGAIN

It has been 25 years since the first energy crisis hit in 1973. That event set the US to conserving fuel and energy, leading to measurable gains in efficiency. But about 10 years later, that trend began to reverse itself and now the US is using energy at almost the same levels it did when the 1973 crisis began.

Total highway miles driven in the US, which leveled off for a while after each of the two energy crises, have continued to rise steeply, hitting their highest historical levels at the present time. Likewise, total highway fuel consumption is at an all-time high. Average fuel mileage of cars and light trucks had been gradually improving, but in the 1990s it leveled off, probably largely because of the proliferation of bigger-engined cars and utility vehicles.

In a lengthy article the NY Times (Oct 22) discussed the problem. It pointed out that while energy efficiencies created in the wake of the oil crises have continued to serve us well, the overall demand for energy has been climbing, to the point that we are almost back where we were in usage in 1973. At the rate we are going, the Times said, in 1999 we will exceed our 1973 per capita consumption of fuel. And at the present the US is buying twice the amount of oil from the Persian Gulf that we did in 1973. While oil imports covered 35% of our consumption in 1973, they now cover 50%, a record level.

What is predicted for the future? Here's what the Times said: "For Joseph J. Romm, who until recently ran the Energy Department's efficiency programs, it is only a question of when the nation will return to conservation, not if. Contending that the world's oil supplies will eventually tighten and temperatures rise, he said, 'Ten years or 15 years from now, people will be desperate to take action.'"

25 YEARS AGO IN RTN:

"A new 'crisis' has emerged out of Washington within the past few weeks or months, gradually gathering momentum. The shortage of fuel, especially of petroleum and petroleum products, and the need to conserve energy have come forcefully to the fore. As one New York Times columnist noted, Washington seems unable to act upon a problem until it reaches a crisis state. Scientists and planners have of course been warning of the squandering of our fuel reserves for years. Now suddenly the problem has become acute. Some blame the Administration for not acting sooner in allowing the importation of additional oil from aboard.

"What this means for transportation is a shortage of gasoline and diesel fuel, the closing of many service stations and the threat of gasoline rationing. Railroads and bus operators are finding themselves short too, and prices of fuel higher. It has been widely stated in the media that gasoline prices could climb to one dollar a gallon within perhaps a year. (Present prices surveyed locally by RTN are about 40 cents a gallon for regular and 43 cents for premium gasoline, on the average.)

"Importantly, the energy crisis has clearly emerged as the number one argument for fostering efficient modes of transportation—and in this respect railroad trains have it all over other transportation means. Already government officials are naming energy shortages even above pollution and congestion problems in citing reasons for alterations in transportation policies."

—From RTN 59, May 1973.

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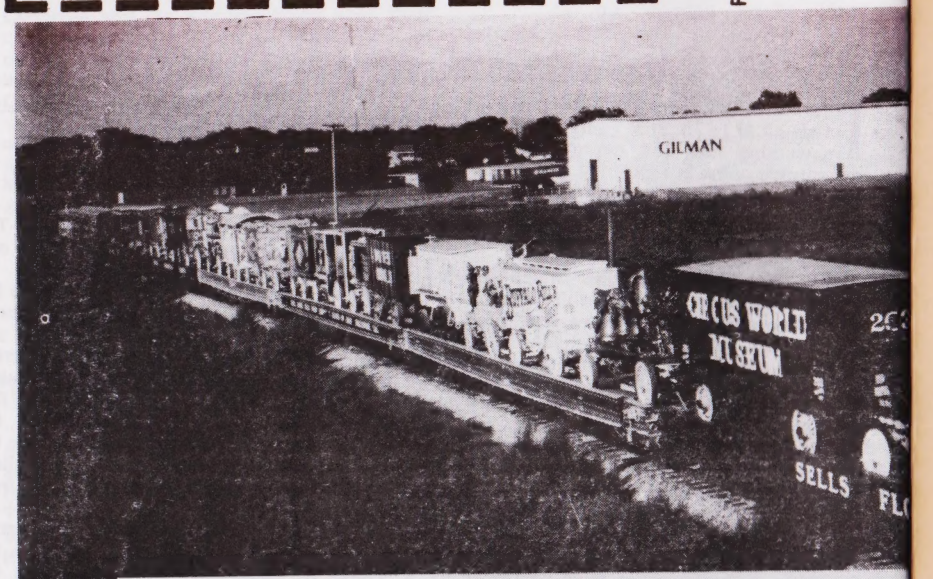

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